



U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney

Eastern District of Pennsylvania

615 Chestnut Street

Suite 1250

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106-4476

(215) 861-8200

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FORMER POLICE OFFICERS SENTENCED FOR DRUG SCHEME

PHILADELPHIA - Former Philadelphia Police Officer Robert Snyder, 31, of Philadelphia, was sentenced today to 157 months in prison for a drug conspiracy and possession with intent to distribute 100 grams or more of heroin within 1,000 feet of a school, and using a telephone in furtherance of a drug conspiracy. Snyder pleaded guilty, February 7, 2011, to seven counts including: conspiracy to distribute 100 grams or more of heroin; possession with intent to distribute 100 grams or more of heroin; possession with the intent to distribute 100 grams or more of heroin within 1000 feet of a school; use of a communication facility in furtherance of drug trafficking; conspiracy to commit robbery which interferes with interstate commerce; attempted robbery which interferes with interstate commerce; and using and carrying a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence.

Snyder committed these crimes while he was employed as a Philadelphia police officer. The scheme involved a plan to steal approximately 300 grams of heroin from a drug supplier by having co-conspirators conduct what appeared to be a legitimate traffic stop, but in reality was a means by which the drugs could be obtained and sold without payment to the drug supplier. The second scheme involved a plan to have co-defendant Philadelphia Police Officer perform a sham traffic stop and pretend to arrest a co-defendant, who at the time of the traffic stop would be in possession of money that the co-conspirators believed was gambling proceeds that a "mafia" member was attempting to launder. Co-defendant James Venziale, 33, of Philadelphia was sentenced yesterday to 42 months in prison for his role in the first conspiracy. He did not participate in the second conspiracy involving the robbery.

The case was investigated by The Drug Enforcement Administration and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, with the cooperation and assistance of the Philadelphia Police Department. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Maureen McCartney, Anthony Wzorek, and Kathy Stark.

UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
EASTERN DISTRICT, PENNSYLVANIA
Suite 1250, 615 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Contact: PATTY HARTMAN
Media Contact
215-861-8525